ORIGIN/ACTION: ARA-10

RM/R	RSP	AF
1		
ARA	EUR	FE
NEA	CU	INR 5
E	P 2	MC 1
SY 1	OPSI 1	AID
S/S 15	S/PM 1	S/P 1
RSMV	HA 20-20	
INT	LAB	TAR
TR	XMB	AIR 5
ARMY 3	CIA 20	NAVY 5
OSD 33	USIA	NSA 3
FBI 5	NIC 1	NSC 6

1967 JUN 26 PM 3 32

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

POL 23 GUAT

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NO. — HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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GUAT/INTSEC

RS/AR
ANALYSIS BRANCH

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA

DATE: June 24, 1967

SUBJECT : INTERNAL SECURITY MONTLY REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
JUN [illegible] 1967

REF :

I. SUMMARY.

By the end of May it was clear that the insurgency/counter-insurgency battle had moved into a new phase, with the dimensions of the insurgency threat having been reduced over the last six months, and the FAR/PGT apparatus definitely placed on the defensive.

The Army's campaign against the guerrillas in the Izabal/Zacapa region has met with marked success, and Col. Arana, the brigade commander at Zacapa, stated in a press conference on May 27 that he estimated guerrilla strength in that area had been reduced by ninety percent.

With the heavy pressure placed on the guerrilla units in the northeast, there was some indication that the main focus of the insurgency/counter-insurgency battle had shifted to the capital. Even here, however, more effective action by the police hurt the FAR/PGT urban apparatus, and several key members of this insurgent grouping were either killed or forced to flee the country. Counter-terror tactics used by the Army and Police were a particularly effective part of the counter-insurgency drive.

Enclosures:
1. Frequency of Terrorist Actions
2. Summary of Terrorist Actions During May

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FORM 4-62 DS-323

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Drafted by: DCM:VPVak/POL:WNewlin:dlb 6/22/67

Clearances: POL I:NHoman (In draft)

Declass and Classification Approved by: DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/IR

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PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

The rise in the incidence of violent death brought on by this over-all situation, together with the barrage of threats and "psychological warfare" from alleged anti-Communist clandestine squads (much of it cover propaganda), has aggravated public nervousness and heightened puzzlement and apprehension as to the ultimate political meaning of it all. The Soto Beteta murder caused a case of jitters at month's end which, however, subsequently subsided (see II below).

The pressure placed upon the insurgent apparatus, meanwhile, created considerable internal stress within the FAR/PGT grouping with the old line PGT leaders apparently reasserting control over the insurgent movement for the time being.

It is thus clear that the battle is far from over, even if the trend is currently favorable to the security forces, and the insurgent threat still remains a serious one.

II. ACTIVITY DURING THE MONTH.

The number of terrorist incidents which had risen in April, rose again in May to a weekly average of between 10 and 11 (see Enclosure 1) which is the highest it has been since the peak period during November and December. In addition, the number of assassinated bodies found throughout the country remained high (27 reported--see Enclosure 2). It is not clear that all of these were connected with the insurgency situation, and some may have been the settling of personal scores. There was also the usual mix of bombings, disappearances, sabotage and robbery. For the most part, the incidents were fairly run of the mill and individually failed to capture the public interest. In some cases, the public may have even been largely unaware of the incident's significance as appears to have been the case with the death of Armando Castillo.

Principal incidents during the month were:

(a) A concentration of police raids over the May 1 weekend resulting in the reported capture of 18 presumed guerrillas (there were even

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more unreported) and the confiscation of a large quantity of arms, propaganda and, particularly damaging to the guerrillas, various FAR/PGT documents compromising certain FAR plans and other secrets.

(b) Ricardo MIRANDA Aldana, leader of PGT and Cuban-trained guerrilla warfare expert of FAR killed on May 2 reportedly by special commando unit of Guatemalan Army.

(c) Julio RODRIGUEZ Aldana, Director of Public Works in Guatemala City, who had been kidnapped from his house in the capital April 29, turned up in Honduras on May 5. Rodriguez, a member of the PGT and probably also the FAR, had been abducted by members of the Army's special commando squad.

(d) Lt. Col. Enrique Trinidad OLIVA Quintana assassinated in capital May 13. His most recent known political activity was as a MANO activist for which he was jailed by the GOG in late February and freed in late March. The FAR-claimed credit for the killing.

(e) Police and guerrillas exchanged fire in gunfight in Villa Nueva, Department of Guatemala, May 22. Two guerrillas and two policemen were killed. In a follow-up action three more guerrillas were captured and arms and propaganda material were confiscated.

(f) Armando CASTILLO Flores, former member of PGT central committee and leader of a PGT urban resistance unit was wounded in a gun battle with police on May 24 and subsequently died. His body was returned by the PGT to his house on June 5, and a fabricated story was given the press that he had been tortured and shot, apparently in an effort to protect the family and the party members who returned his body.

(g) Marco Antonio SOTO Beteta, well-known PR deputy, was machine-gunned to death in front of his house on May 30. Identity of his assassins is still a mystery.

The Soto murder was easily the most dramatic event of the month. While it is still now known who was responsible for his death, the political impact of that murder and of speculation concerning it

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has been lighter than one might have imagined. What the incident did do was provoke an immediate severe case of jitters. Soto was prominent enough that his murder cut through the tolerance Guatemalans have been building up to violence generally and refocussed old fears and apprehensions. Heightened by propaganda threats (see below), the jitters lasted for a few days and then subsided.

III. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WAR.

During the month, the flow of flyers and threats from both the FAR and the various anti-Communist organizations such as NOA, MANO, CADEG, etc. continued, with the greater flow by far coming from the latter. This psychological barrage, particularly by the alleged anti-Communist groups, was a disturbing element to public calm, because it contained threats and accusations against a wide variety of people. In May, for example, a flyer appeared under the name of CADEG containing a "black list" of 21 names, six of whom are officers of the anti-Communist CONTRAGUA labor organization. At about the time of Soto's death another CADEG flyer listing 90 names appeared, many of them definitely not communist. The rush into print of denials by several of the accused, added to the psychological ferment created.

[redacted] B1 FD-

[redacted] is not clear why the flyers are issued, i.e., whether from any devious political or tactical motive or simply from eagerness, and whether inclusion of leftist, but non-Communist names in the "threat" lists have any particular political significance. These are questions which will probably require more perspective to answer.

Meanwhile, things are further confused since flyers are issued freely in someone else's name, so that no one can take any fly- B1 sheet at face value. [redacted] the right-wing elements of the MLN and Liberacionista groups have issued flyers in the name of NOA.

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[redacted] B-1 ED

Generalizations about public reaction are hard to make, however, and it is clear that Guatemalans have developed a high tolerance to violence and have historically been accustomed to conspiracy and deviousness. Perhaps partly for these reasons the nation as a whole is remarkably calm about the internal security situation, with most of the people heartened that the FAR threat has been reduced.

Even at this, there has been a rising concern expressed among articulate parts of the population over the eventual effec of violence qua violence. On May 9, for example, the Catholic episcopate issued a "Pastoral Exhortation" which deplored violence in strong and vivid language and called for social and personal reform. The call for peace, for "civic dialogue" and for an end to violence were the main themes of an increasing number of editorials. By month's end it was clear that public media comment of this sort was just gathering steam, suggesting that the spectacle of mutilated bodies being found daily and threats and counter-threats being exchanged freely may be beginning to make some of the elite uneasy, at least about the pragmatic political effect and meaning of it all if not about the moral or philosophical implications.

IV. SECURITY FORCES.

After almost six months of continuous search and destroy missions, expanded civic action, and the use of civilian armed para-military groups, the Army has isolated the guerrilla groups in the Sierra de las Minas, cut their supply lines and kept them on the defensive. On May 27, Col. Arana, commander of the Zacapa military zone told reporters in a press conference that he estimated only ten percent of the guerrilla force in the northeast remained and that these were scattered in small disorganized groups. While this may have been an exaggeration for public effect, it does appear that the guerrilla threat in the northeast has been greatly reduced.

The more effective action of the police, since Col. SOSA Avila took charge in late March, was also evident in the number of successful

strikes made by the police against the FAR/PGT urban apparatus (see II above).

These activities have also placed the FAR/PGT on the defensive in the urban sector.

V. RIGHT-WING ACTIVITY.

There were continuing reports of groups of armed Liberacionista elements operating in the northeast area with the blessing of or in collaboration with the Army. Jorge CORDOVA Molina and Carlos THOMPSON are cited in such reports as the principal leaders of these groups.

There was no evidence of right-wing paramilitary activity in the capital during May, though it is possible that some of the bombs and other incidents may have been the work of the MANO.

Of some interest was the statement made to the press in late May by Raul LORENZANA, self-confessed official of the MANO who stated that the MANO "opposes any sort of departure from constitutionality and would oppose with all its force any attempted coup d'etat." A letter to the column CACTO in Prensa Libre signed Javier SANTANA in the name of the MANO and published at about the same time assured readers that the MANO was not just another armed band, but a fraternity of dedicated men "sincerely worried about the grave problems affecting Guatemala, the hungry, the bypassed, the disadvantaged and the poor." What all of this publicty meant was the cause for speculation, and not a few rumors circulated to the effect that the Liberacionista/MANO complex may be thinking of reappearing later as a new political party.

VI. INSURGENTS.

By month's end reports indicated that under the pounding they have been taking, the FAR/PGT insurgents have decided to lie low and seek to reorganize.

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[redacted] There were also reports of efforts to organize subversive units in the Escuintla area of the South coast and to reorganize the centers in the University. There have been some vague reports of possible guerrilla training camps in the Polachic valley, and some sightings of armed men in the area between Estor and Panzos, but there have been no reports of active insurgency in these regions.

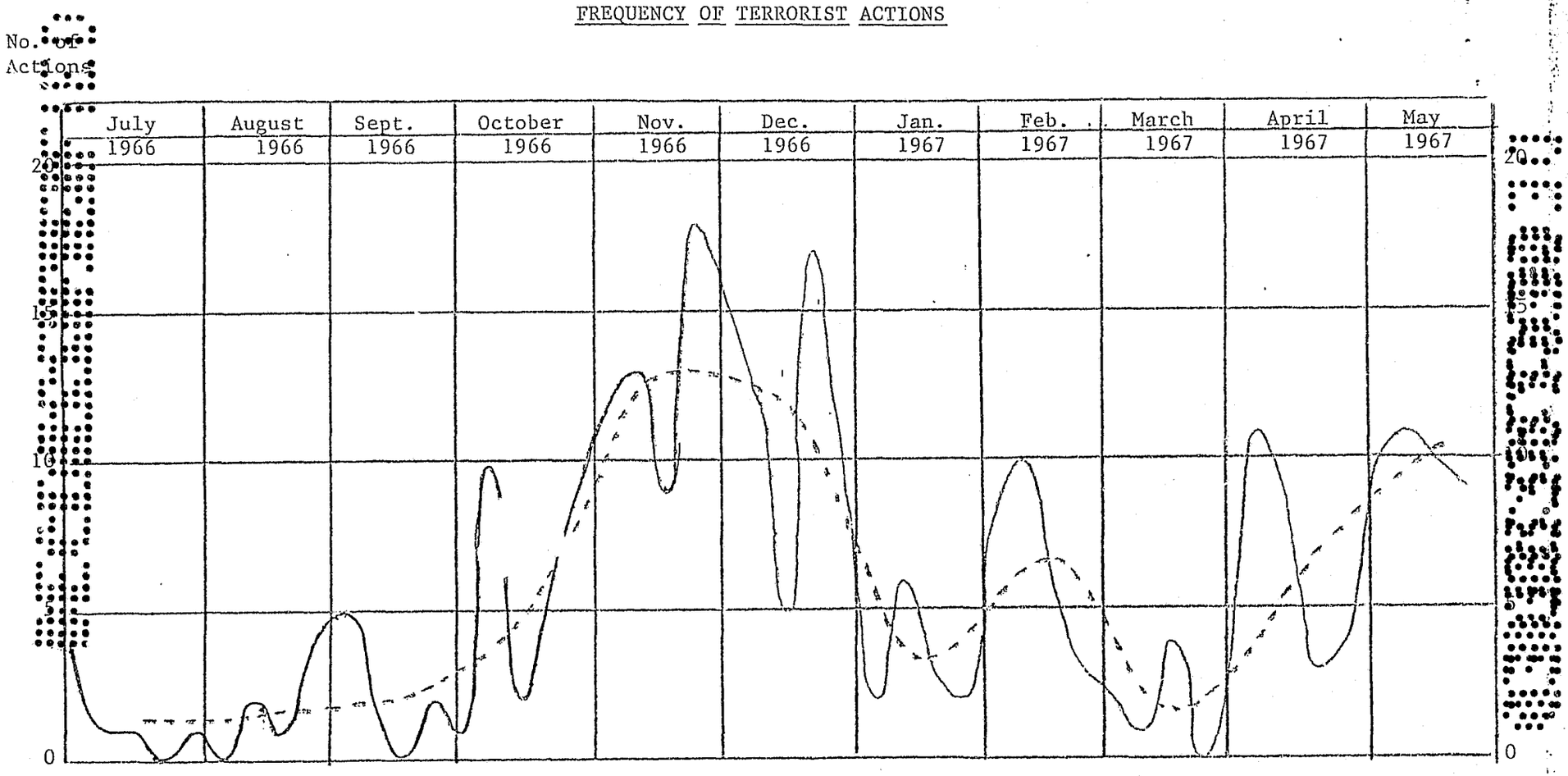
The counter-insurgency pressure has also affected the long existent power struggle between FAR "hard liners" and old line PGT leaders, which more than once has threatened to break up the insurgent apparatus. [redacted] indicated that a reorganization may have occurred in which the old line PGT leaders won out over the FAR hardliners in determining policy and tactics for the insurgency, although it is conceivable that the hardliners may strike out on their own.

It was thus clear that despite the favorable trend of the COIN battle, insurgency is still a dangerous threat, especially if the FAR/PGT succeed in spreading to new areas.

MEIN

Guatemala A- 501
Enclosure 1

FREQUENCY OF TERRORIST ACTIONS



Solid line is weekly figure.
Dotted line is weekly average figure for each month.

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Guatemala A-501
Enclosure 2

SUMMARY OF TERRORIST ACTIONS DURING MAY

1. Shootings

   17 people killed of which:
   - 8 in capital
   - 4 in Department Chiquimula
   - 3 in Departme.t Escuintla

2. 27 Assassinated bodies found of which:
   - 7 in Department El Progreso
   - 4 in Department Guatemala
   - 4 in Department Santa Rosa
   - 3 in Department Chimaltenango
   - 3 in Department Sacatepequez
   - 2 in Department Zacapa
   - 2 in Suchitepéquez Department
   - 2 in Department Izabal

3. 15 bombs in capital

4. 9 kidnappings of which:
   - 7 in Capital
   - 1 in Department Escuintla
   - 1 in Department Zacapa

5. Miscellaneous incidents included:

   1. Shooting up several capital houses
   2. Sabotage, especially on fincas
   3. Theft including a radio transmitter from radio station

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